# AN

# EPISTLE

FROM

G. BYRN TO MISS KENNEDY.

AN

# EPISTLE

FROM

G. BURN TO MRS. KENNEDY.

# AN EPISTLE

FROM

G. BYRN TO MISS KENNEDY,

THE NIGHT BEFORE

HIS EXECUTION AT KILKENNY.

---

Felix! quem facient alieni pericula cautum.

"To warn the frolic, and inſtruct the gay."

SHENSTONE.

---

DUBLIN:

Printed for PAT. BYRNE, Bookſeller, Stationer, &c. No. 35, College-Green, oppoſite the Statue of King William.

MDCCLXXXI.

[PRICE A BRITISH SIX-PENCE.]

AN

# EPISTLE

FROM

## G. BYRN TO MISS KENNEDY,

THE NIGHT BEFORE

HIS EXECUTION AT KILKENNY.

---

Fella! quem faciunt aliqui periculo cautum.

"To warn the frolic, and instruct the gay."

SHERIFFERS.

---

DUBLIN:

Printed for PAT. BYRNE, Bookseller, Stationer, &c. No. 51,
College-Green, opposite the Statue of King William.

MDCCLXXXI.

[PRICE A BRITISH SIX-PENCE.]

AN

# EPISTLE, &c.

FROM darkſome cells, where horror ever reigns,
The clink of fetters, and the claſh of chains;
Where dreadful ſcenes of complicated woe
Would make ſoft Pity's tear inceſſant flow,
The wretched BYRN one Hour beſtows to thee,
'Midſt all this aweful gloom of miſery;
He does not ſeek his innocence to prove,
"To ſue for Pity, or awake thy love;"
Nor does he hold a ſingle wiſh to live,
His GOD he only aſks him to forgive.

Try'd

Try'd and condemn'd, to-morrow doom'd
to die,
Too ſwift, alas! the winged moments fly!
Too ſhort the time for penitence aſſign'd,
To heal my ſorrows and compoſe my mind;
Strong doubts and fears now agitate my breaſt,
Nor give this tortur'd heart an inſtant's reſt;
Fixt, like Deſpair, my head between my knees,
I feel no moment's interval of eaſe:
Now urg'd by frenzy ſtrong, my eye-balls roll,
And lab'ring paſſions ſhake my very ſoul;
The lawful courſe of juſtice I arraign,
Curſe heaven, and earth, and man, but all in
vain;
Till feeble nature can no more ſuſtain,
And the weak pulſe ebbs faſts in ev'ry vein;
Then, plenteous fall, O mimickry of grief!
The peeviſh tears, that mock at all relief:
In vain I ſtrive this weakneſs to deſpiſe,
To check the hectic tear, and choak my ſighs:

Tears

Tears will have way, they will unbidden flow,
The guſh of anguiſh! and the vent of woe!
Sleep, her ſweet comforts to the wretch denies,
From miſery's abode ſhe ſwiftly flies;
To woe-fraught minds inflexibly ſevere,
" She lights on lids unſullied with a tear."

Depriv'd of thee, great nature's ſecond courſe,
Of eaſe and happineſs the conſtant ſource;
When night ſpreads o'er this earth her ſable veil,
And tortur'd minds their wretchedneſs bewail;
When ſhame, remorſe, their conſtant vigils keep,
And pining victims wake alone to weep:
Say! doſt thou give one interval from care,
And wretchedneſs ſupreme a moment ſpare;
In ugly ſhapes, fantaſtic forms ariſe,
And air-drawn viſions fleet before my eyes:
Ideal fancies o'er my ſlumbers roll,
And form a very chaos in my ſoul;

Now

Now ſtrong imagination brings to view
Scenes of paſt joys, I never can renew;
Thoſe halcyon days, when innocent delights
Brought joy to crown my days, and reſt my nights;
When youth and innocence walk'd hand in hand,
And paſſions were obedient to command;
When, peacefully, ſat Reaſon on her throne,
And ignorant of guilt, I dreaded none.

Theſe pleaſing dreams of bliſs ſome moments laſt,
Then think the agonies of death are paſt;
The world eternal breaks upon my view,
And horrors, quick on horrors, now accrue;
In chains of adamant my ſoul is bound,
And headlong hurl'd within the depth profound;
Again, inclos'd in folds of thick-rib'd ice,
Heart-freezing cold, I'm held as in a vice;

Nature

Nature revolts to feel the chill ſo plain,
And ſhiv'ring agues ſhake in every vein.

Now by the viewleſs winds impetuous torn,
In raging blaſts, on rolling clouds I'm borne;
Swift through the realms of ſpace eternal toſt,
And, in the vaſt expanſe, an atom, loſt.
Sudden I ſtart; I quit my weary bed,
And 'croſs my cell with haſty ſteps I tread;
Haggard with fear, and tott'ring as I ſtalk,
Pale I look back, and tremble as I walk;
At every little ſound I fearful ſtart,
And feel each pulſe revibrate at my heart;
With ſoul contrite, upon my knees, I fall,
And on the God of mercy fervent call.
"Thou Pow'r ſupreme," that rul'ſt the rolling year,
Whoſe high beheſts the wicked yet revere;
That gav'ſt us life, and all things here below,
And taught "True knowledge was ourſelves to know;"

Who

Who view'ſt a wretch, condemn'd by ſentence juſt,
An abject worm, now humbled in the duſt;
On thee alone his hopes of mercy dwell,
To ſave him from the dreadful jaws of hell.
Thou, who can'ſt make Deſpair itſelf reſign'd,
Send down the charmer, Hope, to ſooth my mind.
Arm me with patience, teach me pain to bear,
And reſignation let me learn from pray'r.
Come, Reſignation, let thy rays divine,
O'er this ſad breaſt, with peace ſeraphic, ſhine!
Come, ſweet Religion, fortify my ſoul,
Theſe lab'ring paſſions let thy pow'r controul;
Pour thy ſweet healing balm thro' ev'ry part,
And probe with lenity this aching heart;
On God alone learn every hope to truſt,
With whom whatever is, is truly juſt.

Rais'd

Rais'd by theſe thoughts, I now can death defy,
And look upon it with indifferency;
Near, and more near, I feel its terrors leſs,
And think it but the road to happineſs.

Unhappy STRANGE! for thee my tears will flow,
Source of my guilt—companion of my woe—
Friendſhip to me has brought thy ruin on,
And law's ſevereſt courſe thou canſt not ſhun.
What dreadful anguiſh fills this breaſt of mine,
That thou wert a partaker in my crime;
And more ſevere—O bitterneſs of thought!
Thy brother to deſtruction too we've brought;
Scarce rear'd to man, with ev'ry op'ning grace,
The down juſt ſhewing on his youthful face;

With

With manly firmneſs, an exalted mind,
A feeling heart, and ſentiments refin'd;
Fraternal love has doom'd in chains to lie,
And end his being ignominiouſly.

Why, Mem'ry, doſt thou to reflection bring,
What adds a ſtronger pang, a ſharper ſting?
(The ſharpeſt ſting humanity can prove)
It is ingratitude from her I love.

Ungrateful KATHERINE! ſource of my undoing,
Could naught content thee but my very ruin?
How I have lov'd, witneſs ye moments fleet,
That danc'd away with down upon your feet!
When my imagination painted you,
As then I thought, to love a vot'ry true,
Nor dreamt you diſſimulation knew;

When

When every glen, each meadow, and each
grove,
Reſponſive echo'd to my tales of love;
When, all enamour'd, on thy ſmiles I've
hung,
Bleſt with the ſofteſt accents from thy tongue.

How oft to meet me at the morning's
dawn,
You've bruſh'd the dew-drop from the ſpangled
lawn?
How often brav'd the mid-day's ſultry heat,
To meet me in ſome ſhady cool retreat?
How often ſhar'd the pleaſant ev'ning's walk,
When love and conſtancy were all our talk?
When vows of firm fidelity were giv'n,
By oaths repeated in the face of heav'n?
By all thoſe pleaſures which you ſeem'd to
ſhare,
By all thoſe miſeries I'm doom'd to bear,

By

By all thoſe joys I hope in heav'n to find,
'Twas you, and only you, employ'd my mind.
When friends oppos'd the progreſs of my love,
And, by repeated tales, to part us ſtrove;
When ev'ry glance, each geſture was obſerv'd,
Miſconſtru'd every look and ev'ry word;
Say! did I ever ſeem to love you leſs,
Or ſhew propenſity to fickleneſs?——
Ah, KATHERINE, no; that crime I charge to thee,
From which proceeds my preſent miſery.

When Rumour ſpread thou hadſt inconſtant grown,
And favours to another lover ſhewn,
When next we met I told thee all my fears,
In broken accents, and diſſolv'd in tears;
My ſuſpicions own'd, my jealouſy,
And horrid dread I felt of loſing thee.

What

What comfort from thy anſwer did I find,
To ſooth and mollify my woe-worn mind.
Theſe were thy words, "Ah ceaſe thy ſpeech
"unjuſt,
"And in thy faithful KATHERINE learn to
"truſt;
"Repoſe thy confidence on truth ſincere,
"Baniſh each doubt, diſpel each anxious
"fear;
"From earlieſt years our fond affection grew,
"And reaſon juſtifies my love for you;
"Upon her truth, her faith, you may rely,
"With thee who'd only live, with thee who'd
"die."

Some days then paſt, nor gave you to my
view,
Your abſence all my former fears renew;
No more I met you at the place aſſign'd,
Your friends us'd ev'ry art to warp your mind;

Us'd

Us'd artifice itſelf to repreſent
Each little fault of mine; e'en tales invent;
Malicious tales, of falſhood's blackeſt dye,
And wound your boſom with a well-fram'd lie.
To ſhock me more, t' increaſe the bitter leaven,
A rival encouragement was given.
The ſtory, borne by ev'ry breath of wind,
Diſtracts with jealouſy my frenzied mind.

Strait to my friends I inſtantly repair'd,
And, in ſtrong terms of grief, my mind declar'd;
Reſolv'd to ſeize, force her with me to fly,
Or, failing in th' attempt, to bravely die.
Stung by my grief, and mov'd by my diſtreſs,
My friends all vow'd to aid me; to redreſs

My

My wrongs; uſe all their utmoſt art,
And gain me the poſſeſſor of my heart.
They all aſſent—we fix the very night,
The STRANGES, the companions of my flight
Agreed to be; for, in the elder's breaſt,
Love's ardent paſſion robb'd his ſoul of reſt;
For KATHERINE's Siſter he had felt a flame,
Hard to ſuppreſs, and difficult to tame;
To me, in confidence, he oft avow'd
A love ſincere, he never was allow'd
To tell; for prejudices run ſo high,
He was conſider'd as an enemy.
Warm'd by fraternal love and friendſhip's band,
The younger brother lent a willing hand;
Some few aſſociates favour'd our deſign,
And help'd to fill up our determin'd line.

Short be my tale. Th' appointed time arriv'd,
And, punctual to the moment, we contriv'd,
Each ſeiz'd his fair and bore her far away,
And reach'd our ſhelter ere the break of day.
No ſooner ſafe, than at your feet I knelt,
And painted all the paſſions that I felt;
Urg'd my fond love, my wild, my mad deſpair,
I beat my frantic boſom, tore my hair,
Vow'd from that poſture never to have ris'n,
Till the poor culprit was by you forgiv'n.

With ſtreaming eyes, and with uplifted hands,
Think that this moment he before you ſtands;
Recall that picture preſent to your view,
And, ſay if ever grief was half ſo true.
You ſaw my ſoul depicted in my eyes,
You ſeal'd my pardon, and you bade me riſe;

Declar'd

Declar'd my crime eternally forgiven,
As you hop'd mercy from the hand of heaven.

Thus reconcil'd again to love and thee,
What pen could paint my joy, my extacy;
Yet fears intrude——no ſafety there was found,
Our flight had rais'd the neighb'ring country round;
Thoughts of detection; fear of loſing thee,
Involv'd my ſoul in poignant agony;
I urg'd my ſuit, each fond perſuaſion try'd,
You bluſh'd conſent; the knot the prieſt ſoon ty'd,
And KATHERINE became my willing bride.

By our example ſway'd, without command,
Your ſiſter too on STRANGE beſtow'd her hand.

Oh!

Oh! with what joy I offer'd every vow,
And happineſs ſat beaming on my brow.
The joys of wedlock let the married boaſt,
He can deſcribe them beſt, who felt them moſt:
The joys that poets paint in fancied charms,
Were poor to what I knew within thy arms.
Say, cruel Girl, when on thy breaſt I lay,
In ſighs extatic breath'd my ſoul away;
When rapturous joys our kindling ſouls would melt,
And each receiv'd the bliſs the other felt;
Where are thoſe vows, thoſe proteſtations fled,
You fondly made me on the nuptial bed;
When, dreading yet the malice of your friends,
Who'd leave no ſcheme untry'd to gain their ends,
Could'ſt thou, my KATHERINE, aid their cruel ſtrife,
And with their malice join to take my life?

Thy

Thy anſwer was——Lord of my heart! my life!
By all the tender ties that bind a wife;
Thy fate, whate'er it be, I will partake,
And even death will ſuffer for thy ſake.

Revers'd the ſequel, you in court appear'd,
And from the bench, unmov'd, my ſentence heard;
Unfeeling heard thy huſband doom'd to die,
Nor dropt one pitying tear, nor heav'd a ſigh,
Nor once reflected that 'twas all thro' thee,
He's plung'd in this abyſs of miſery.

God of the righteous! Power ſupreme, divine!
Omniſcient! all-preſent! all-divine!
Who taught my ſoul to fix her thoughts on high,
And humbly hope to reach eternity.

Jehovah!

Jehovah! Lord! thou great Almighty God!
Chaſten'd, thy ſervant bows to kiſs thy rod.
If at thy ſhrine I dare one boon to crave
Before I reach the manſions of the grave,
Extend thy mercy to this thoughtleſs fair,
Nor leave her to the horrors of deſpair;
My ample forgiveneſs ſhe receives from me;
That pardon give to her I hope from Thee!

FINIS.

# NEW BOOKS AND PAMPHLETS,

PUBLISHED AND SOLD BY

PAT. BYRNE, Bookſeller, Stationer, &c.

No. 35, COLLEGE-GREEN, Corner of CHURCH-LANE, and oppoſite the Statue of K. William.

I. AN ESSAY on HISTORY, in Three Epiſtles to Edward Gibbon, Eſq. with Notes, by William Hayley, Eſq. Price 2s. 2d.

"This Poem is written in a nervous, animated, and "expreſſive Style; adorned with glowing Imagery "and Deſcription.—*Mr. Hayley*'s leaſt Merit is, that "of being the beſt Poet of his Age." *Crit. Rev.*

"This Poem is enriched with more valuable Notes "than we remember to have met with in any "Work." *M. Rev.*

II. Three LETTERS to the Earl of Carliſle, from the Right Hon. William Eden. Price 1s. 1d.

III. A VOLUNTEER'S QUERIES for Spring 1780. Humbly ſubmitted to the Conſideration of all Deſcriptions of Men. Price 1s. 1d.

*** As this Pamphlet contains Hints, Plans, &c. for the Improvement of Agriculture, Arts, Manufactures, and Fiſheries—Aſſociations and internal Defence—of Ireland—it is well worthy the Peruſal of every Friend to the Kingdom.

IV. CON-

IV. CONSIDERATIONS on the SUGAR and MUTINY BILLS; addreſſed to the Kingdom at large, but to the Citizens of Dublin in particular. Price 6½d.

V. A LETTER to Travers Hartley, Eſq. Chairman to the Body of Merchants, on the Subject of the Sugar Bill. Price 3d.

†‡† As theſe two Pamphlets contain the Subſtance of all that cauſed the Reſolutions in the different Parts of the Kingdom—the Impartial would do well to peruſe, and ſee, whether Moderation or Violence were moſt eligible in ſuch Situation.

VI. A LETTER from Edmund Burke, Eſq. M. P. for Briſtol, to Thomas Burgh, Eſq. M. P. for Athy (Ireland) vindicating his Conduct with regard to Iriſh Affairs. Price 1s. 1d.

VII. MOORE'S VIEW of SOCIETY and MANNERS in France, Switzerland and Germany, with Anecdotes relating to ſome eminent Characters, 2 vols. Price, neatly bound, 6s. 6d.

VIII. SKETCHES from NATURE, in high Preſervation, by the moſt honourable Maſters; containing upwards of one hundred and ten Portraits or Characters of the moſt conſpicuous Perſons in the Kingdom. Price 1s. 1d.

☞ This Pamphlet has gone through twelve Editions in the Courſe of a few Months; an evident Proof of its Merit.